

## College of Music

# Gideon F. Alorwoyie



**Professor of Percussion**

**Director of the African Percussion Ensemble**

**Department(s)**

[Instrumental Studies, Percussion](#)

**Contact Information**

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[Courses taught, syllabi and curriculum vitae](#)

Gideon Alorwoyie is professor of music, principal dancer/choreographer and Director of the UNT African Percussion Ensemble. He joined the College of Music faculty in 1996.

He is the High priest of the Yewe Cult.

Alorwoyie is from Anlo-Afiadenyigba in the Volta Region of Ghana, West Africa and is highly regarded as one of Ghana's foremost virtuosos of traditional music and dance.

He was discovered by Phillip Gbeho, then head of the Institute of Art and Culture in Ghana at Hogbetsotso and annual Anlo-traditional cultural festival. Gbeho was so impressed with young Gideon that he offered him a position at the Institute of Art and Culture in 1964. From 1967-84, Alorwoyie worked in the Department of African Studies at the University of Ghana as chief master drummer of the Ghana National Dance Ensemble. Here he acquired the ability to perform music from different cultures. He toured France, the United Kingdom, West Germany, Switzerland, the former USSR, Yugoslavia, the Caribbean, Seoul Korea, Hong Kong, China and the United States as a member of the Ghana National Dance Ensemble. Alorwoyie is the founder and the Artistic Director of the Afrikania Cultural Troupe of Ghana, West Africa, member of the Ethnomusicology Association, and member of the Council of Elders, Dance Africa Chicago.

Alorwoyie has worked with notable scholars and composers such as David Locke, John Chernoff, and Steve Reich. He held positions at the State University of New

York, College at Brockport, the American Conservatory of Music and at the Old Town School of Folk Music in Chicago before joining the University of North Texas faculty. He is the founder and artistic director of the Chicago-based African-American Unity Ensemble and a member of the advisory council of the African Music Caucus and Percussive Arts Society. His recent projects have included performances at the Ghana Fest in Chicago, master classes in the Ritual Music of Ghana, West Africa at the New England Conservatory in Boston and performances at the inauguration of CEANA in Atlanta. He currently holds the position of master drummer and artistic director of the UNT African Percussion Ensemble.

Torgbui Gideon Foli Alorwoyie is a wonderful musician, a superb dancer and has command of a vast repertoire. He is a virtuoso instrumentalist who has expanded the range of traditional African drumming and possesses extraordinary control of tonal inflection over a wide dynamic range. When he performs, one senses his total command of the medium.

Professor Midawo Gideon Foli Alorwoyie has been recently installed as Paramount Chief at Tsiyinu-Afegame/Afife, traditional area in the Volta Region of Ghana, West Africa, under the stool name of Torgbui Foli Ameanyo III, (Dufia of Tsiyinu/Afife). The event took place on Saturday March 13, 2004.

**Professional Organizations:**

Promoted to Full Professor, Spring Semester 2011

11-1-99 to present Member, Advisory Council of the African Music Section, Society for Ethnomusicology

11-31-99 to present Member, Percussive Arts Society

10-23-02 to present Member, Society for Ethnomusicology

10-25-02 to present Member, Council of Elders, Dance Africa, Chicago, IL

**Books:**

*Agbadza: The History and Music of an Ewe War Drum.* Gideon Alorwoyie and David Locke.(Submitted for review to Woeli Press)

**CDs:**

"African Cultural Festival" CD - The Afrikania Cultural Troupe of Ghana, West Africa Concert, University of North Texas, College of Music, Concert Hall, April 5, 2009.

"Rhythms of Africa" CD - The UNT African Percussion Ensemble Concert, University of North Texas, College of Music, Main Auditorium, November 19, 2009.

"African Cultural Festival" CD-The Afrikania Cultural Troupe of Ghana, West Africa Concert at the University of North Texas, Voertman Hall, March 31 and April 2, 2011.

**Performances:**

Multicultural Center, Black History Month Banquet, African music and dance performance, February 18,2009 at the Gateway Center, Denton, Texas.

UNT Pan African Student, Black History Month Banquet, African music and dance performance at the Gateway Center, Denton, Texas, February 23,2009.

Annual African Cultural Festival of Ethnic music and dance at the Concert Hall, Denton, with guest artists groups, Denton, Texas, April 5, 2009.

University of Hong Kong Summer Institute. July 24,2009. Hong Kong, China.

Hogbetsotso Festival of the Noviha, UK. African music and dance performance at Tottenham Green Leisure Centre, London, England, September 5, 2009.

UNT World Fest on the square, African music and dance performance, Downtown Square, Denton, TX - September 26,2009.

Hogbetsotso Festival of the Ewes of Ontario, African music and dance at North Kipling Community Center, Canada, October 10,2009.

Southern Volta Association of Canada, Appreciation Day performance of African music and dance at the Northwood Community Centre, 15 Clubhouse Court, Toronto, October 11,2009.

World Music Festival, African music and dance at Addison, Texas, October 24, 2009.

UNT African Percussion Ensemble, Rhythms and Dances of Africa performance at the UNT Main Auditorium, Denton, Texas, November 19, 2009.

African Life and Culture Assembly, African Music and Dance performance at Woodrow Wilson High School, February 25,2011.

First African Freedom Church, Black History Month, African Music and Dance performance at Martin Luther King Jr. Center, Dallas, February 27,2011.

Annual African Cultural Festival of Ethnic Music and Dance, Voertman Hall, March 31 and April 2,2011.

#### **Lectures:**

"Introduction to African Drumming" MUAG 1117, Percussion Methods for percussion majors, LINT, Denton, Texas, October 28,2009.

"Music Cultures of the World," MUET 3030, College of Music, UNT Denton, Texas, October 27,2009.

"Popular Music in American Culture," MUET 3020, College of Music, UNT Denton, Texas, November 16,2000.

"Music Cultures of the World" MUET 3030, College of Music, UNT Denton, Texas, Spring Semester 2011.

"Popular Music in American Culture" MUET 3020, College of Music, UNT Denton, Texas Spring Semester 2011.

"Introduction to African Drumming" MUAG 1117, Percussion Methods for percussion majors, UNT Denton, Texas, Spring Semester 2011.

#### **Workshops:**

Summer Institute, University of Hong Kong, African Music and Dance Workshop in Hong Kong, July 15-23,2009.

#### **Grants:**

"Linguistic Meaning in the Anlo-Ewe Patterns in Brekete Ritual Music." UNT Research and Creativity Enhancement Awards.

"African Cultural Festival of Ethnic Music and Dance." Spring 2009, UNT. Grantors: Mayor's Office, City of Denton; UNT University Council; UNT Fine Arts; UNT Dance and Theater Department.

Faculty Development Grant. "Gideon Foli Alorwoye: A Doyen in African Drumming." Fall Semester 2011.